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cidences, together with equally remarkable differences in view-points and in peculiarities of diction. One might think that where there is so much similarity both in subject and in expression—in matter and in manner—the gospels would largely lose their individuality. Yet while no three accounts of the life of the same man, written under such widely differing circumstances, have agreed so minutely even to the smallest details, no three books have ever claimed and deserved such studious attention or, by their very coincidences and differences, have thrown so much individual light on the supreme centre of their aims as have the gospels of Matthew Mark and Luke. Each author has stamped upon his work his own personality. Each has his definite and peculiar purpose, and each composition is a unit in itself, while all three contribute to give a single grand and unified picture of Jesus the Christ.

[To be continued.]

A LETTER IN BEHALF OF TRUTH.

By BEN JASHAR.

To the Editor of THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT STUDENT.

DEAR SIR:—I am a country minister and a constant reader of your Journal. I do not often intrude my thoughts upon the world through the public prints; but I am alarmed at the skeptical and daring critical tendencies of the age. It has given me great distress of late to reflect over the indifference with which many men, who are supposed to be religious, contemplate attacks upon the truth, and over their disposition to leave it to itself without defence. This it seems to me, it is an entirely unsafe thing to do. For has not truth ever been maintained by means of a struggle with its foes? and was it not due to the strength of its champions, and by the overthrow of the champions of error, that truth has won the victory? We see illustrations of the process all about us. The manufacturer by inventive skill is able to sell an article at less cost than his neighbor, and so crowds him out of the market. The lawyer lives on the quarrels of men, winning his case only by overthrowing an antagonist. The physician grows

fat over the ailments of his fellow-men, and the prison-warden over their crimes. The minister secures a living because men are not disposed to be what they ought to be, because they have spiritual needs. Such is life everywhere. And why, pray, should not the possessors of the truth fight for it, and live on the distresses of its enemies? It is especially necessary to emphasize the importance of this at this time, when there prevails such a tendency on the part of Christian denominations to unite in pacific intercourse with one another, and to remain silent about their differences of opinion. It strikes me as very strange that men can be induced to make light of these peculiarities in their own opinions without which tenets they would have no reason at all to exist in denominations. And until every sect can establish the articles of its creed in the face of all opposers, how can it be safe to dissipate our energies in striving for the regeneration of humanity and the salvation of the world? Whither are we tending, Mr. Editor? When we speak of the inherent power of truth and of leaving truth to itself, are we not really making light of truth? "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again," may be quoted with favor by unthinking minds, but, has any one seen it tried? The fact simply is that we have never yet suffered truth to be crushed to earth.

The arguments used to disprove the old truths of the gospel are very numerous and very sophistical. Some recent books, which, but for the stir which they have made on account of the novelties which they contain, would have had very little circulation, are full of them. It is maintained with unblushing *effrontery* and in the baldest way that Augustine did not believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment; that the ancient Eastern church held laxer (or larger as some of these books say) views of inspiration than her Western sister; that even Luther, and Calvin and the sainted Baxter and other sturdy leaders of the Reformation and *post* Reformation time admitted inaccuracies in the Sacred Word; as if these statements were not inconsistent with the real soundness of their views, and as if they would be held by these worthy brethren, were they living to-day. Then, too, it is said, and said very artfully, we must confess, that the uncompromising adherence to the old, which is here defended, even to the

extent of compelling assent to it, is but a relic of Papal domination and ought to be discarded. But it may be we have gone too far with our Protestantism. It will certainly not do to allow men to believe what is essentially unsound. We must not allow the Protestant principle to run wild with us, and permit an individual to think for himself unless he thinks what is true, and he ought not to be permitted to interpret his Bible for himself, unless he gets from it what our fathers found in it. To be sure an occasional blot can be discovered on the page of history, but it is essentially a new notion that human learning can tell us anything about divine truth. This truth is spiritually discerned. Our fathers had spiritual discernment. Hence, with a few unimportant exceptions, they perceived the truth, and if we find the facts against them, the facts must be untrue facts. Revise the facts, if you will, but let the truth alone.

And then, if you suffer a man to be an independent thinker at all, he is likely to lose some aspect of truth, and, if he once begins that, where will he stop?

Should not all good people unite against the pride of human learning and the vain conceits of men?

I have just thought of the following strong confirmation of my argument. In the New Testament, some obscure man, Gamaliel by name, gave advice to the effect that error would commit suicide, if it had rope enough; but who has ever heard of Gamaliel since, or of his ridiculous advice? Whereas the celebrated Uzzah, the good and wise and martyred Uzzah, how he lingers in the mind of posterity! For did not he defend the ark even unto death? Of course the person that killed him tried to fasten his deed upon the Lord, but Uzzah will be remembered so long as the ark is for positive, uncompromising and effective defence of it, when it was shaken. I tremble to think what would have become of the ark, if this careful man had not supported it, and I suppose the reason it was finally lost is that men were afraid of Uzzah's positive policy and dreaded the slight personal inconvenience of it more than they cared for the continued preservation of the sacred chest.

Yours for the old traditions,

Dec. 15, 1889.

BEN JASHAR.